



# Fact Sheet

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## ***The Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act***

### **Key Statistics for Montana**

#### ***Ordinary Income Rates***

The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)*, which was signed into law on December 17, 2010, cuts taxes for middle-class Montanans by extending the lower individual tax rates enacted in 2001. In fact, all **477,153** taxpayers in Montana will see their lower rates extended through 2012.<sup>1</sup> The extension of the lower rates will put more money in the hands of Montana's middle-class families.

#### ***Payroll Tax Cut***

The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* includes a temporary payroll tax cut that will benefit all workers in Montana. Specifically, the bill provides an employee-side payroll/self-employment tax reduction of two percentage points during 2011. As a result, **600,000** Montanans will see bigger paychecks next year.<sup>2</sup> For a typical worker in Montana, this payroll tax cut would be worth **\$677** next year.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> IRS, Statistics of Income Division, "Individual Income and Tax Data, by State and Size of Adjusted Gross Income, Tax Year 2008," accessed November 23, 2010, <http://www.irs.gov/taxstats/article/0,,id=171535,00.html>.

<sup>2</sup> White House, data released and accessed on [12/17/10](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/12/17/10-12-17-tax-relief).

<sup>3</sup> Calculations are based on 2009 individual median earnings data from the U.S. Census, available here: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/acsbr09-3.pdf> (Table 2). Under H.R. 4853, next year employees will pay only 4.2 percent on wages and self-employed individuals will pay only 10.4 percent on self-employment income up to the threshold (\$106,800 in 2011).

## ***Unemployment Insurance***

The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* reauthorizes emergency federal Unemployment Insurance benefits for one year, or until the end of 2011. In Montana, there are **11,752** residents who would have been at risk of having their unemployment benefits expire without this legislation.<sup>4</sup> The bill ensures that their jobless benefits would be extended while they look for work.

## ***Alternative Minimum Tax***

The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* provides Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) relief in 2010 and 2011 by indexing the 2009 exemption amounts and extending AMT relief for nonrefundable personal credits. This will prevent **45,000** middle-class families in Montana from paying the AMT in 2010.<sup>5</sup>

## ***Child Tax Credit***

The bill extends for two years both the expanded Child Tax Credit created in the 2001 tax cut legislation and the lower threshold above which taxpayers can count earnings when determining refundability, which was included in the *American Reinvestment and Recovery Act* (P.L. 111-5). The Child Tax Credit provides important tax benefits to low- and middle-income families. In 2008, **73,262** families in Montana claimed the Child Tax Credit, resulting in an average tax cut of \$1,297.<sup>6</sup>

## ***American Opportunity Tax Credit***

Created under the *Recovery Act*, the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) is available to offset up to \$2,500 of the cost of tuition expenses such as books and course supplies. This credit makes college more affordable for many lower- and middle-income Americans. In 2009, **22,000** Montanans claimed the AOTC, for an average tax break of \$1,773.<sup>7</sup> The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* extends the AOTC for two years.

## ***Earned Income Tax Credit***

The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* supports working families in Montana by extending for two years expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The bill extends the higher credit for families with three or more children and also reduces the marriage penalty by increasing the phase-out point for married couples filing jointly. **78,427** families claim the EITC in Montana, receiving on average a \$1,809 tax break.<sup>8</sup> The EITC has proven to be a successful strategy for encouraging people to choose work over welfare.

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<sup>4</sup> White House, data released and accessed on [12/17/10](#)

<sup>5</sup> Congressional Research Service, "Alternative Minimum Taxpayers by State: 2007, 2008, and Projections for 2010," (RS22083, November 15, 2010): 7.

<sup>6</sup> IRS, "Individual Income and Tax Data, Tax Year 2008"

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "The American Opportunity Tax Credit," (October 12, 2010): 24.

<sup>8</sup> IRS, "Individual Income and Tax Data, Tax Year 2008"

### ***Sec. 1603 Treasury Grants for Renewable Energy***

Created by the *Recovery Act*, the Section 1603 Treasury Grants program provides cash payments for renewable energy property in lieu of tax credits. This valuable program is a key incentive for spurring investments in renewable energy projects, such as solar and wind, and creating clean energy jobs for Montanans that cannot be shipped overseas. Thus far, 8 individual applicants in Montana have received Sec. 1603 grants.<sup>9</sup> The *Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization and Job Creation Act (H.R. 4853)* extends for one year the start-of-construction deadline for the program, ensuring that new grants remain available for new projects in Montana.

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<sup>9</sup> Department of Treasury's webpage on the Sec. 1603 program, List of Awards, accessed [12/20/10](#)